

22 December 2012

Executive Officer  
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AHPRA  
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By email to: [medboardconsultation@ahpra.gov.au](mailto:medboardconsultation@ahpra.gov.au)

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Standard for Intern Training**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a second submission from The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) in response to the Medical Board of Australia's second round consultation on the proposed registration standard for granting general registration as a medical practitioner.

We note with regret the omission of any reference to the importance of encouraging and strengthening psychiatric training in the intern period. We would like to emphasise that we are not requesting a mandatory acute inpatient psychiatric rotation in our original submission, but rather stating that compulsory competencies are necessary for all interns to gain basic principles of psychological medicine, knowledge of common mental illnesses and a better understanding in order to decrease stigma around treating patients with mental illness.

Improved mental health literacy amongst health practitioners is crucial for our society to begin to address the high prevalence of mental illness in the community and the extreme burden these diseases carry with them. Mental illness affects around 20 percent of the population, can be a chronic and enduring illness and is associated with a higher percentage of severe physical illness and high mortality. We note that psychiatry is often poorly understood by general hospital consultants, particularly as the vast majority of 'psychiatric hospital' work is based in the community. It is important that all medical practitioners understand how psychological issues affect the mental health and wellbeing of their patients regardless of which field of medicine they specialise in.

The Medical Council of New Zealand is currently undertaking a similar revision to their prevocational training requirements and is seriously considering a mandatory run in psychiatry given the increasing extent of mental illness in the community. RANZCP applauds this move and strongly encourages the Medical Board of Australia to consider how greater emphasis on psychiatry can be incorporated into intern training within Australia.

RANZCP would be pleased to contribute to the development of guidelines or strategy on this matter.

Yours sincerely



Dr Maria Tomasic  
**President**

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